Gandhi's India

Unity in Diversity

GANDHI'S INDIA
UNITY IN DIVERSITY

(SELECTIONS PREPARED BY
THE NATIONAL INTEGRATION SUB-COMMITTEE
OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR GANDHI
CENTENARY)

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CONTENTS

	Foreword	vii
	Introduction	ix
I.	General	1
II.	Harmony of Religions	18
III.	Social Bonds and Barriers	27
IV.	Hindu-Muslim Unity	51
V.	Language	63
VI.	Economic Equality	73
VII.	Some Memorable Passages	80
	Sources and Notes	83

FOREWORD

I am glad that the National Integration Sub-Committee of the National Committee for Gandhi Centenary have compiled, and the National Book Trust is publishing, this little volume of selections entitled "Gandhi's India: Unity in Diversity".

Gandhiji lived for peace, harmony and reconciliation and he laid down his precious life for the vindication of these ideals. The core of his teaching has relevance for all ages and peoples because it transcends time and space. We have often strayed from the path he showed us. But, I have no doubt that, if we are to survive as a strong and united nation, we will have to heed his sage counsel.

I commend this brief but beautiful anthology of Bapu's utterances for earnest study by the young people in our schools and colleges and by all those who have the unity of the country at heart.

Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi-4
April 24, 1968

ZAKIR HUSAIN

INTRODUCTION

The selections have been grouped under different heads and within each group the items have been arranged in chronological order. The sources are listed at the end, with brief notes where necessary.

Gandhiji's basic ideas underwent no change during the forty years of his active public life, but their expression and application varied according to circumstances. While India struggled for freedom, large sections of its people remained divided by walls of communal, religious or linguistic prejudices; these barriers weakened and distracted the national will for freedom. Gandhiji made it his concern to reconcile differences and bring about harmony in place of conflict: he worked for heart-unity, not mere adjustments, for without such unity he felt that Swaraj, even if it did come, could not be genuine Swaraj.

Nationalism was for him a natural and useful half-way house in the individual's progressive identification with all mankind. Willing service to one's family had already been accepted as one's *dharma* in Indian society. This *dharma* was not to be abrogated, but expanded and transcended, by accepting patriotism as an additional *dharma* appropriate to the age. Identification with all humanity was the ultimate ideal, but this was to be pursued through the intermediate agency of a free nation functioning in accordance with its own *dharma*. The integrity of the individual was "the supreme consideration", the starting point and final goal of all

human progress. The social milieu was of high but secondary importance. It was the means, like "food", for a worth-while life; the individual as a spiritual entity, the centre of awareness and the source of moral action, was the end, the "eater".

Gandhiji's views on human relations in a sane society were not just opinions; they were convictions based on experience and backed by readiness for self-sacrifice. From Gandhiji we can learn not ready-made solutions to our problems but a method and earnestness of approach which appeals to conscience and reason, stresses the basic unity of contending groups and commends to all the common good as their common concern.

I. General

Gandhiji regarded himself as a citizen of the world as well as of India. He loved India dearly and dedicated his life to securing for it freedom from foreign domination, but he loved the British—and all other peoples—no less dearly and his fight for India's freedom was a fight on behalf of mankind, a fight against oppression and exploitation of man by man.

Was Gandhiji a nationalist? "India should prosper, no matter at whose cost", or "My country, right or wrong" would express the usual nationalist sentiment, but not sentiment that Gandhiji would approve. "My country, which I shall keep or make right" and "the good of India for the sake and as part of all mankind"—this represented his patriotism, which was love for India without hatred of any other country. He was a sound nationalist because he believed in and laboured to consolidate the nationhood

of India, which should reconcile and transcend the linguistic, religious and cultural diversities which at times tended to obscure our national identity. Only so could India serve as a laboratory for trying out and forging principles which would guide human relations everywhere.

II. Harmony of Religions

Gandhiji was "a man of God" and lived an intensely religious inner life, from which his outward activities derived their strength and meaning. It was in religion that he found his true being. But he distinguished between the dogma and the attitude, the letter and the spirit—for "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life". The first, consisting of the Shastra, the received word, Gandhiji refused to accept uncritically. "Every formula of every religion," he said, "has in this age of reason to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent." It was the spirit that he cared for. This spirit was for Gandhiji best expressed in Narasimh Mehta's *bhajan* which describes the true Vaishnava as one who can identify himself with others in their suffering. It was these others, the suffering creatures of God, whom he sought to serve as Daridranarayana. His life was an incessant striving to identify himself more and more completely with more and more of them. This striving to free himself from the limitations of the ego was ever the preoccupation of Gandhiji. It permeated all his activity, political and social. Here Krishna of the *Bhagavad Gita* was his mentor and *karma yoga* his philosophy.

At the same time, he had reverence for other religions

and admired their nobler manifestations. All religions he believed revealed God; only the description varied. If there was religious strife, men and not religions were responsible. He wished people to live the religion to which they belonged—be it Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism or Hinduism—in truth and in spirit, thus bringing about a harmony of religions in the country. His tolerance was the result not of indifference but of a deep understanding of the truth present in all religions despite their apparent differences.

All forms of property and human accomplishments are gifts of nature and products of social living; hence those who possess them should be regarded as trustees, bound by *dharma* to use them for the good of society.

These selections explaining the implications of National Integration in Gandhiji's own words have been compiled and edited at our request and on our behalf by a group of workers in the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi under the direction of Sri K. Swaminathan. The Committee is deeply grateful to them.

K. SANTHANAM
Chairman
National Integration Sub-Committee
of the
National Committee for Gandhi Centenary

I. GENERAL

1. From "Hind Swaraj"

Editor: ...The English have taught us that we were not one nation before and that it will require centuries before we become one nation. This is without foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same. It was because we were one nation that they were able to establish one kingdom. Subsequently they divided us.

Reader: This requires an explanation.

Editor: I do not wish to suggest that because we were one nation we had no differences, but it is submitted that our leading men travelled throughout India either on foot or in bullock-carts. They learned one another's languages and there was no aloofness between them. What do you think could have been the intention of those farseeing ancestors of ours who established Setubandha (Rameshwar) in the South, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage? You will admit they were no fools. They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts were aglow with righteousness had the Ganges in their own homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation.

Arguing thus, they established holy places in various parts of India, and fired the people with an idea of nationality in a manner unknown in other parts of the world. And we Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. Only you and I and others who consider ourselves civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations.

Reader: You have described to me the India of the pre-Mahommedan period, but now we have Mahommedans, Parsis and Christians. How can they be one nation? Hindus and Mahommedans are old enemies. Our very proverbs prove it. Mahommedans turn to the West for worship, whilst Hindus turn to the East. The former look down on the Hindus as idolaters. The Hindus worship the cow, the Mahommedans kill her. The Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing, the Mahommedans do not. We thus meet with differences at every step. How can India be one nation?...

Editor: India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation; they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland. The Hindus, the Mahommedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow-countrymen, and they will have to live in unity, if only for their own interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India...

Reader: Now I would like to know your views about cow protection.

Editor: I myself respect the cow, that is, I look upon her with affectionate reverence. The cow is the protector of India because, being an agricultural country, she is dependent on the cow. The cow is a most useful animal in hundreds of ways. Our Mahommedans brethren will admit this.

But, just as I respect the cow, so do I respect my fellowmen. A man is just as useful as a cow no matter whether he be a Mahommedan or a Hindu. Am I, then, to fight with or kill a Mahommedan in order to save a cow? In doing so, I would become an enemy of the Mahommedan as well as of the cow. Therefore, the only method I know of protecting the cow is that I should approach my Mahommedan brother and urge him for the sake of the country to join me in protecting her. If he would not listen to me I should let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability. If I were overfull of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

When men become obstinate, it is a difficult thing. If I pull one way, my Muslim brother will pull another. If I put on superior airs, he will return the compliment. If I bow to him gently, he will do it much more so; and if he does not, I shall not be considered to have done wrong in having bowed. When the Hindus became insistent, the killing of cows increased. In my opinion, cow-protection societies may be considered cow-killing societies. It is a disgrace to us that we should need such societies. When we forgot how to protect cows, I suppose we needed such societies.

What am I to do when a blood-brother is on the point

of killing a cow? Am I to kill him, or to fall down at his feet and implore him? If you admit that I should adopt the latter course, I must do the same to my Muslim brother.

Who protects the cow from destruction by Hindus when they cruelly ill-treat her? Whoever reasons with the Hindus when they mercilessly belabour the progeny of the cow with their sticks? But this has not prevented us from remaining one nation.

Lastly, if it be true that the Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing and the Mahommedans do not, what, pray, is the duty of the former? It is not written that a follower of the religion of ahimsa (non-killing) may kill a fellow-man. For him the way is straight. In order to save one being, he may not kill another. He can only plead—therein lies his sole duty...

Reader: But will the English ever allow the two bodies to join hands?

Editor: This question arises out of your timidity. It betrays our shallowness. If two brothers want to live in peace, is it possible for a third party to separate them? If they were to listen to evil counsels we should consider them to be foolish. Similarly, we Hindus and Mahommedans would have to blame our folly rather than the English, if we allowed them to put us as under. A clay pot would break through impact, if not with one stone, then with another. The way to save the pot is not to keep it away from the danger point, but to bake it so that no stone would break it. We have then to make our hearts of perfectly-baked clay. Then we shall be steeled against all danger. This can be easily done by the Hindus. They are superior in numbers; they pretend that they are more educated; they are, therefore, better able to shield themselves from attack on their amicable relations with the Mahommedans.

There is mutual distrust between the two communities. The Mahommedans, therefore, ask for certain concessions from Lord Morley. Why should the Hindus oppose this? If the Hindus desisted, the English will notice it, the Mahommedans would gradually begin to trust the Hindus, and brotherliness would be the outcome. We should be ashamed to take our quarrels to the English. Everyone can find out for himself that the Hindus can lose nothing by desisting. That man who has inspired confidence in another has never lost anything in this world.

I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mahommedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so. We shall sometimes have our heads broken. Such a thing ought not to be necessary, but all men are not equitable. When people are in a rage, they do many foolish things. These we have to put up with. But when we do quarrel we certainly do not want to engage counsel and resort to English or any law-courts. Two men fight; both have their heads broken, or one only. How shall a third party distribute justice amongst them? Those who fight may expect to be injured.

2. Message to Lahore Sikhs

The Akalis are a great party of purists. They are impatient to rid the *gurudwaras* of abuses that have crept in. They insist upon uniformity of worship in the *gurudwaras*. The movement has been going on for some years. Both cooperating and non-cooperating Sikhs have, since the movement of non-cooperation, been acting in concert so far as the *gurudwara* movement is concerned. And even if

it is discovered ultimately that the Akali party went to Nankana Saheb by show of force to dispossess a *mahant* who had abused his trust, History will still call the immolation an act of martyrdom worthy of high praise...

Time, however, for adjudging the exact value of the martyrdom is not yet. It is more to the point to consider the immediate steps that should be taken. I can only think of the tragedy in terms of Indian nationality. The merit of the brave deed must belong not merely to the Sikhs but to the whole nation. And my advice, therefore, must be to ask the Sikh friends to shape their future conduct in accordance with the need of the nation. The purest way of seeking justice against the murderers is not to seek it. The perpetrators, whether they are Sikhs, Pathans or Hindus, are our countrymen. Their punishment cannot recall the dead to life. I would ask those whose hearts are lacerated to forgive them, not out of their weakness—for they are able in every way to have them punished—but out of their immeasurable strength. Only the strong can forgive. You will add to the glory of the martyrdom of the dear ones by refusing to take revenge.

3. Humanity v. Patriotism

...My appeal in that letter is to the Sikhs as Indians. And it was enough for me to confine my appeal to the point that could be easily appreciated and reached by those whom I was addressing. The main reasoning would be the same for all, and at all times. My letter as addressed to the Sikhs would have lost its force somewhat if I had broadened the appeal as from patriotism to humanity. A Sikh who will want to punish a non-Sikh criminal but

would forgive a Sikh may be told that to him Sikh and Indian must mean the same thing in matters such as the incident covers. The appeal to an Indian as against an Englishman will be to his humanity rather than to his patriotism.

But I am free to confess that, in the present state of feeling, an Englishman may easily misinterpret the motive of the letter. For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from that of the patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. There is no conflict between private and political law. A non-cooperator, for instance, would act exactly in the same manner towards his father or brother as he is today acting towards the Government.

4. Definitions of Swaraj

I take the reader's leave to put before him the various definitions of swaraj which I keep formulating in my mind.

(1) Swaraj means rule over one's self. One who has achieved this has fulfilled his individual pledge.

(2) We have, however, thought of swaraj in terms of some symbol or image. Swaraj, therefore, means the complete control by the people of the country's imports and exports, of its army and its law courts. This is the meaning of the pledge taken in December. Such swaraj may or may not have room for the British connection. If there is no solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat issues,

there will be no room for such connection.

(3) But then it is possible that sadhus as individuals enjoy swaraj even at present, and that, even when we have a parliament of our own, people may not feel that they are free. Swaraj, therefore, means easy availability of food and cloth, so much so that no one would go hungry or naked for want of them.

(4) Even under such circumstances, it may happen that one community or section seeks to suppress another. Swaraj, therefore, means conditions in which a young girl could, without danger, move about alone even at dead of night.

(5) These four definitions will be found to include many others. Nevertheless, if swaraj has infused—and it ought to infuse—a new spirit in every one of the classes which make up the nation, it will mean total disappearance of the practice of treating *Antyajas* as untouchables.

(6) End of the Brahmin–non-Brahmin quarrel.

(7) Complete disappearance of the evil passions in the hearts of Hindus and Muslims. This means that a Hindu should respect a Muslim's feelings and should be ready to lay down his life for him, and *vice versa*. Muslims should not slaughter cows for the purpose of hurting Hindus; on the contrary, they should on their own refrain from cow-slaughter so as to spare the latter's feelings. Likewise, without asking for anything in return, Hindus should stop playing music before mosques with the purpose of hurting Muslims, should actually feel proud in not playing music while passing by a mosque.

(8) Swaraj means that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews should all be able to follow their own faith and should respect those of others.

(9) Swaraj means that every town or village should

be strong enough to protect itself against thieves and robbers and should produce the food and cloth that it requires.

(10) Swaraj means mutual regard between the princes or zamindars on the one hand and their subjects on the other, that the former should not harass the latter and the latter, in their turn, should give no trouble to the former.

(11) Swaraj means mutual regard between the rich and the working class. It means the latter working gladly for the former for adequate wages.

(12) Swaraj means looking upon every woman as a mother or sister and respecting her to the utmost. It means doing away with the distinctions of high and low, and acting towards all with the same regard as for one's brother or sister.

It follows from these definitions that in swaraj (1) the Government will not trade in liquor, opium and things of that kind; (2) no speculation can be permitted in food grains and cotton; (3) no person will break a law; (4) there can be no room at all for wilfulness, which means that a person cannot act as a judge when he is himself charged with something, but should let the charge be examined in a duly established court in the country.

5. For the Masses

We may call ourselves Christians, Hindus or Mahommedans. Whatever we may be, beneath that diversity there is a oneness which is unmistakable and underneath many religions there is also one religion. As far as my experience goes, at one time or other, we, the Mahommedans, Christians or Hindus discover that there

are many points of contact and very few points of difference. Then I would like you to ask yourselves whether you have any message for the villages, for the women of the villages, for your sisters there. I am afraid you will also come to the same conclusion as I have, that you will never have a message unless something is added to your education. It is true that the present educational system takes no notice of the village life. It is not so in other parts of the world. In the other parts of the world, I have noticed that those in charge of education take note of the masses of the people among whom these products of schools and colleges have to live and have to disperse, among whom they have to act. But in India, I have noticed that the student world is isolated from the masses of the people. I have no doubt that some of you are poor girls descended of poor parents. If you have not made that discovery yourselves, I ask you to make it for yourselves and ask yourselves whether the things that you learnt here you are able to take to them or whether there is real correspondence between home life and school life. The lack of that correspondence has appeared to be the tragedy. I have suggested, therefore, to the whole student world of India to add something to what they are learning in schools, and then you will find there will be some satisfaction for themselves and some satisfaction for the masses also and to those who will be so good as to think of the masses.

I have known that Christian girls and Christian boys, at least some of them, consider that they have nothing in common with the vast masses of people. That is mere ignorance. No good Christian nowadays says that and, I am sure, no one here in charge of your education gives you that training and teaches you that you have nothing in common with the masses. No matter to what religion

you belong, I say that you were born in India, take Indian food and pass your life in India. Your life would be incomplete in more senses than one unless you can identify yourselves with the masses. What is that bond between the masses and yourselves?...

6. Nationalism v. Internationalism

...In my opinion, it is impossible for one to be an internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when people belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of and rise on the ruins of the other. Indian nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them, I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country.

7. Hate Evil, Not the Evil-doer

...Is it possible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country, whose domination we do not want, whose domination we dislike from the bottom of our hearts? The answer has been in the hearts of many young men that it is impossible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country. Some of them express their opinion in broad day light, few of them translate that opinion into action. Many, however, harbour this opinion in secret and feed upon that opinion.

I have been a student of this question, not since my return to India in 1915, but ever since I entered into public life and public service. That was in 1894. But I have come deliberately to the conclusion that love of one's country, namely nationalism, is perfectly consistent with the love of those whose rule, whose domination, whose methods we do not like. I was face to face with that problem in my dealings with the South African Government or, more accurately speaking, the then Natal Government; later on with the Transvaal Government and later still with the Union Government. Most of you are aware of the disabilities—the glaring disabilities—under which our countrymen labour in that sub-continent—South Africa. It is enough; those disabilities are really enough, to make one hate one's fellow beings, if one did not preserve one's sanity. You find there injustice rampant for no cause save that you do not have the same colour of skin... When you come to India you find, though not the same thing, much the same thing and very often one finds it most difficult to reconcile the two things, love of one's country and love also of one whom you may consider to be the tiger. It is beside the point whether you are just and correct in your

estimate or whether you are incorrect, but the impression left upon your mind is that you are labouring under the grossest form of tyranny, grossest form of injustice. How shall you then love the tiger?

Let me put it in another way—not necessarily that you should love the tiger, but love is an active force and the subject of this evening is—Is it necessary to hate the tiger? Is hatred essential for nationalism? You may not love, but must you also hate? The answer, as I have said before, in the minds of many people is undoubtedly that you must hate. Some, I know, consider it their duty to hate the tiger and they cite instances from modern constitutions, they cite the late disastrous war in Europe, they cite wars of which they have learnt in history; they cite also the law, and they say society hangs on the gallows those who are guilty of murder. Is not that a sign of hatred? There certainly is no love. Would not one love one's father, would not one love one's dearest ones, even if they might err? Would one wish them to be hanged on the gallows? One would pray for their reformation, but not for their punishment, and yet, it is said, perhaps with a great deal of justification, that society will break into pieces if, under the law of sanction, punishment was withdrawn, abolished or suspended. With those images before them, the young men rush to the conclusion that those who consider that hatred is not essential for nationalism are in the wrong. I do not blame them. They have to be pitied; they command my sympathy, but I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that they are labouring under the grossest delusion; and so long as they retain that attitude, the progress of this country, the progress of the world will be retarded. It does not matter to me that all those facts that I have placed before you can be cited in order to justify their conduct.

The world is weary of it. We see the fatigue overcoming the Western nations. We see that this song of hate has not benefited humanity. Let it be the privilege of India to turn a new leaf and set a lesson to the world (cries of 'hear; hear'). Is it necessary that three hundred millions of people should hate one hundred thousand Englishmen? That is the concrete term to which I can reduce this evening's subject. In my humble opinion it is derogatory to the dignity of mankind, it is derogatory to the dignity of India to entertain for one single moment hatred towards Englishmen. That does not mean that you are to be blind to the excesses the English rulers have been found to commit in India. I have drawn this particular distinction between the evil and the evil-doer. Hate the evil but not the evil-doer. We ourselves, everyone of us, are full of evil. And we want the world to be patient with us, to be forgiving, to be gentle with us. I would like the same thing to be meted out to the Englishmen. Heaven knows no one in India perhaps can claim better than myself to have spoken as fiercely and as fearlessly of the many misdeeds of English rulers and the corrupt nature of the system under which we are governed. My freedom from hatred—I would even go so far as to claim for myself individually—my love of those who consider themselves to be my enemies, does not make me blind to their faults. That is no love which is extended simply because of the possession of some virtues fancied or real in the beloved. If I am true to myself, if I am true to mankind, if I am true to humanity, I must understand all the faults that human flesh is heir to. I must understand the weaknesses of my opponents, the vices of my opponents and yet, in spite of these vices, not hate but even love them. It is by itself a force. Brute force has been handed down to us from generation to generation. We have used it and we have

found what it has done for Europe and what it has done for the world. The glamour of European civilization does not dazzle us. Scratch beneath the surface and you will find there very little to choose.

8. Brotherhood of Man

My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my life and the whole of my time. But through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of brotherhood of man. My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or the exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always in every case, without exception, consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large. Not only that but my religion and my patriotism derived from my religion embrace all life. I want to realize brotherhood or identity not merely with the beings called human, but I want to realize identity with all life, even with such beings as crawl on earth. I want, if I don't give you a shock, to realize identity with even the crawling things upon earth, because we claim common descent from the same God, and that being so, all life in whatever form it appears must be essentially one. I can therefore safely claim all the credit that you may choose to give me in describing my mission of brotherhood of man...

9. Purna Swaraj

...*Purna Swaraj*—"Purna" complete, because it is as much for the prince as for the peasant, as much for the rich landowner as for the landless tiller of the soil, as much for the Hindus as for the Musalmans, as much for the Parsis and Christians as for the Jains, Jews and Sikhs, irrespective of any distinction of caste or creed or status in life. The very connotation of the word, and the means of its attainment to which we are pledged—truth and non-violence—precludes all possibility of that swaraj being more for some one than for the other, being partial to some one and prejudicial to the other. Truth and non-violence leave no room for fraud or falsehood. The Congress has attracted the attention of the world for the simple reason that it is pledged to win freedom by means unemployed by nations heretofore. The world has so far been familiar with only one method of achieving freedom and that by the use of physical force. But luckily for itself and the world, India has launched on the method of non-violence and truth for the attainment of its independence. It is a unique thing in history, and the world which began by regarding it with scepticism is today watching India's great non-violent experiment with bated breath. In physical warfare even chicanery and fraud have a place, but non-violence precludes the use of all other weapons except that of truth and justice. Swaraj under this method, therefore, can never be achieved by usurping the rights of any community, big or small, but by ensuring even-handed justice and fair treatment to all—even the poorest and weakest in the land. That being so, how can the Congress want to keep even a child out of its own?

10. India and the World

...We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into watertight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, 'India should be all in all, let the whole world perish.' That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have the goodwill towards the whole of the human family and not merely for the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe?

II. HARMONY OF RELIGIONS

11. Religion and Country

...There is undoubtedly a sense in which the statement is true when I say that I hold my religion dearer than my country and that therefore I am a Hindu first and nationalist after. I do not become on that score a less nationalist than the best of them. I simply thereby imply that the interests of my country are identical with those of my religion. Similarly, when I say that I prize my own salvation above everything else, above the salvation of India, it does not mean that my personal salvation requires a sacrifice of India's political or any other salvation. But it implies necessarily that the two go together...

12. My Mission

I do not consider myself worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the race of prophets. I am an humble seeker after truth. I am impatient to realize myself, to attain *moksha* in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom

of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha*. To attain my end it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of a cave. I carry one about me, if I would but know it. A cave-dweller can build castles in the air, whereas a dweller in a palace like Janak has no castles to build. The cave-dweller who hovers round the world on the wings of thought has no peace. A Janak, though living in the midst of "pomp and circumstance", may have peace that passeth understanding. For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the *Gita* I want to live at peace with both friend and foe. Though, therefore, a Musalman or a Christian or a Hindu may despise me and hate me, I want to love him and serve him even as I would love my wife or son though they hate me. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.

13. Idolatory of Fanaticism

...I am both an idolater and an iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true sense of the terms. I value the spirit behind idol worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours. My alliance with the Musalmans presupposes their perfect tolerance for my

idols and my temples. I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of idolatry in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the Deity save one's own. This form of idolatry is more deadly for being more fine and evasive than the tangible and gross form of worship that identifies the Deity with a little bit of a stone or a golden image.

14. God is One

...The need of the moment is not one religion, but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions. We want to reach not the dead level, but unity in diversity. Any attempt to root out traditions, effects of heredity, climate and other surroundings is not only bound to fail, but is a sacrilege. The soul of religions is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The latter will persist to the end of time. Wise men will ignore the outward crust and see the same soul living under a variety of crusts. For Hindus to expect Islam, Christianity or Zoroastrianism to be driven out of India is as idle a dream as it would be for Musalmans to have only Islam of their imagination rule the world. But if belief in One God and the race of His Prophets in a never-ending chain is sufficient for Islam, then we are all Musalmans, but we are also all Hindus and Christians. Truth is the exclusive property of no single scripture.

15. Tolerance

...Tolerance should be our aim. If all of us hold uniform views, where then is the scope for this generous virtue of tolerance? However, this search for uniformity is as futile as looking for flowers in the sky. Hence, the only possible alternative for us is to tolerate one another's views. According to my Muslim friends, I, a born idol-worshipper, a believer in incarnation and rebirth, must necessarily cultivate tolerance for Muslims who do not believe in idol-worship, who do not believe in incarnation and perhaps in rebirth. I, a believer in incarnations, do not think that Christ alone was God, or that he alone was the son of God. Nevertheless, I should tolerate the fact that my Christian friends look upon Christ as God and, similarly, Muslims and Christians should tolerate the fact that I bow in reverence to Kanyakumari and Jagannath. I can see that the age of tolerance is dawning in my own lifetime, because tolerance is at the root of the dharma of ahimsa. That very same tolerance is also at the root of the dharma of truth. Truth, like God, has a thousand diverse aspects. I cannot therefore insist that my view about the nature of truth is the correct one, and those of others wrong...

16. At Kanyakumari

...By discovering the way of image-worship, he [the Hindu] has not multiplied the one God into many, but realized the fact and shown it to the world that man can worship—and he will continue to worship—God in His

diverse forms. Although the Christians and the Muslims do not regard themselves as idolaters, nevertheless, those who worship their ideals are also image-worshippers. A mosque or a church also involved a form of image-worship. Imagining that one can become more holy only by going to these places is a form of idol-worship, and there is no harm in such a belief. Even the faith that God is revealed only in the *Koran* or the *Bible* is idol-worship and an innocent one. The Hindu goes further and says that everyone should worship God in the form he likes...

17. Hinduism

...I have found it [Hinduism] to be the most tolerant of all religions known to me. Its freedom from dogma makes a forcible appeal to me in as much it gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables the followers of that faith not merely to respect all the other religions, but it also enables them to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths. Non-violence is common to all religions, but it has found the highest expression and application in Hinduism (I do not regard Jainism or Buddhism as separate from Hinduism). Hinduism believes in the oneness not merely all human life but in the oneness of all that lives. Its worship of the cow is, in my opinion, its unique contribution to the evolution of humanitarianism. It is a practical application of the belief in the oneness and, therefore, sacredness, of all life. The great belief in transmigration is a direct consequence of that belief. Finally the discovery of the law of *Varnashrama* is a magnificent result of the ceaseless search for truth...

18. Broadest Toleration

I should love all men—not only in India but in the world—belonging to different faiths to become better people by interacting with one another, and if that happens the world will be a much better place to live in than it is today. I plead for the broadest toleration, and I am working to that end. I ask people to examine every religion from the standpoint of the practitioners themselves. I do not expect India of my dream to develop one religion, i.e., to be wholly Hindu, or wholly Christian, or wholly Musalman, but I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another.

19. Equality of Religions

I do not like the word tolerance, but could not think of a better one. Tolerance may imply a gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faiths to one's own, whereas ahimsa teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth who follows the law of love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but would have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection, even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus

imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution and re-interpretation. Progress towards Truth, towards God, is possible only because of such evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect and liable to err. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would think it our duty to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

The question then arises: Why should there be so many different faiths? The Soul is one but the bodies which She animates are many. We cannot reduce the number of bodies; yet we recognize the unity of the Soul. Even as a tree has a single trunk but many branches and leaves, so is there one true and perfect Religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium. The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command, and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody is wrong. Hence the necessity for tolerance, which does not mean indifference towards one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the north pole from the south. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith. Cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.

Tolerance obviously does not disturb the distinction

between right and wrong, or good and evil. The reference here throughout is naturally to the principal faiths of the world. They are all based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints...

When I was turning over the pages of the sacred books of different faiths for my own satisfaction, I became sufficiently familiar for my purpose with Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Hinduism. In reading these texts, I can say that I was equiminded towards all these faiths although perhaps I was not then conscious of it. Refreshing my memory of those days, I do not find I ever had the slightest desire to criticize any of those religions merely because they were not my own but read each sacred book in a spirit of reverence and found the same fundamental morality in each. Some things I did not understand then, and do not understand even now, but experience has taught me that it is a mistake hastily to imagine that anything we cannot understand is necessarily wrong. Some things which I did not understand first have since become as clear as day light. Equimindedness helps us to solve many difficulties and even when we criticize anything we express ourselves with a humility and a courtesy which leave no sting behind them.

The acceptance of the doctrine of the Equality of Religions does not abolish the distinction between religion and irreligion. We do not propose to cultivate toleration for irreligion. That being so, some people might object that there would be no room left for equimindedness if everyone took his own decision as to what was religion and what was irreligion. If we follow the law of Love, we shall not bear any hatred towards the irreligious brother. On the contrary, we shall love him, and therefore either we shall bring him to see the error of his ways or he will

point out our error, or each will tolerate the other's difference of opinion. If the other party does not observe the law of Love, he may be violent to us. If however we cherish real love for him, it will overcome his bitterness in the end. All obstacles in our path will vanish if only we observe the golden rule that we must not be impatient with those whom we may consider to be in error but must be prepared, if need be, to suffer in our own person.

20. Religion A Personal Matter

...Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

III. SOCIAL BONDS AND BARRIERS

21. A Curse

There is an ineffaceable blot that Hinduism today carries with it. I have declined to believe that it has been handed to us from times immemorial. I think that this miserable, wretched, enslaving spirit of "untouchableness" must have come to us when we were in the cycle of our lives, at our lowest ebb, and that evil has still stuck to us and it still remains with us. It is, to my mind, a curse that has come to us and as long as that curse remains with us, so long I think we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for this great and indelible crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension;...

22. Essential Reform

... I observe that questions are still asked about issues which I though had been made sufficiently plain. According to the Congress resolution and my personal opinion as well, removal of untouchability can have only

one meaning. That is what we, Hindus, must rid ourselves of the sin of untouchability. The four *varnas* do not regard one another's touch as defiling or sinful. We should treat *Antyajas* in the same way. It has been repeatedly stressed that the resolution has no other implication. As there is no inter-dining or inter-marriage among other communities, so also we are not required by the Resolution to have such relations with *Antyajas*. There can be no compulsion in these matters. But the conduct of the person who objects to physical contact as such with another person or looks upon someone as untouchable merely because he is born in a certain community, violates Nature's law, is repugnant to the spirit of compassion and to Shastra in the true sense of the word. To mix up the efforts being made to end this sinful practice with inter-dining and inter-marriage is to obstruct the progress of the atonement which it is essential for us to go through. The evil of untouchability has struck such deep roots among us that we do not recognize it as evil. One would actually think that it was being carefully preserved as an ornament to the Hindu community. When well-wishers of the community find it difficult to end this evil, practical men would not introduce further difficulties and obstruct the progress of the reform.

Inter-dining and inter-marriage are issues relating to reform of the caste system. Those who believe that caste should be abolished are working to bring about these reforms. But it should be clearly realized that their efforts are entirely distinct from, and have nothing whatever to do with, the eradication of untouchability. Those who wish to abolish castes also help in eradicating untouchability, and that is only right. If they understand, however, that the reforms of inter-dining and inter-marriage are distinct from efforts to abolish untouchability, they will be able to

judge their relative importance on merit.

What, then, is meant by the eradication of untouchability? I thought this was already clear. It means that the so-called untouchables should be as free as members of other communities to move about as they please, should be allowed to join schools and enter temples which are open to others and to draw water from the wells from which the rest draw it.

The argument that the untouchables are dirty in their ways and follow some unclean occupation is, to my mind, the result of ignorance. There are others dirtier than the untouchables, yet they draw water from the public wells. A nursing mother does unclean work, and so does a doctor, but we honour both. If it is said that they wash themselves after they have done their work, so do many untouchables before they go to a well to fetch water. If, however, they do not keep themselves clean, the fault is ours. To despise them, to compel them to live at a distance from the village, to make it impossible or difficult for them to gain access to the means of keeping themselves clean and then to reproach them for being unclean is the height of injustice. It is our sacred duty to help them to shake off the defects which have grown upon them owing to our negligence and our tyranny. To refuse to do this and yet to hope for India's freedom is like turning one's back towards the sun and yet hoping to get a glimpse of it...

23. Hydra-headed Monster

... Untouchability is a hydra-headed monster. It is therefore necessary, each time the monster lifts its head, to deal with it. To stories told in the *Puranas* are some of

them most dangerous if we do not know their bearing on the present conditions. The Shastras would be death-traps if we were to regulate our conduct according to every detail given in them or according to that of the characters therein described. They help us only to define and argue out fundamental principles. If some well-known character in religious books sinned against God or man, is that a warrant for our repeating the sin? It is enough for us to be told, once for all, [that] *Truth* is the only thing that matters in the world, that *Truth* is God. It is irrelevant to be told that even Yudhishthira was betrayed into an untruth. It is more relevant for us to know that when he spoke an untruth, he had to suffer for it that very moment and that his great name is no way protected him from punishment. Similarly, it is irrelevant for us to be told that Adi-Shankara avoided a *chandala*. It is enough for us to know that a religion that teaches us to treat all that lives as we treat ourselves cannot possibly countenance the inhuman treatment of a single creature, let alone a whole class of perfectly innocent human beings. Moreover, we have not even all the facts before us to judge what Adi-Shankara did or did not do. Still less do we know the meaning of the world *chandala* where it occurs. It has admittedly many meanings, one of which is a sinner. But if all sinners are to be regarded as untouchables, it is very much to be feared that we should all, not excluding the Pundit himself, be under the ban of untouchability. That untouchability is an old institution, nobody has ever denied. But if it is an evil, it cannot be defended on the ground of its antiquity.

If the untouchables are the outcastes of the Aryan society, so much the worse for that society. And if the Aryans at some stage in their progress regarded a certain class of people as outcastes by way of punishment, there

is no reason why that punishment should descend upon their progeny irrespective of the causes for which their ancestors were punished.

That there is untouchability even amongst untouchables merely demonstrates that that evil cannot be confined and that its deadening effect is all-pervading. The existence of untouchability amongst untouchables is an additional reason for cultured Hindu society to rid itself of the curse with the quickest despatch.

If the untouchables are so because they kill animals and because they have to do with flesh, blood, bones and night-soil, every nurse and every doctor should become an untouchable and so should Christians, Musalmans and all so-called high-class Hindus who kill animals for food or sacrifice.

The argument that because slaughter-houses, toddy shops, and houses of ill fame are or should be isolated, untouchables should likewise be isolated betrays gross prejudice. Slaughter-houses and toddy-shops are and should be isolated. But neither butchers nor publicans are isolated...

24. Removal of Untouchability

...Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular state of family. In the words of Akha, it is an excrescence. In the guise of religion, it is always in the way, and corrupts religion.

None can be born untouchable, as all are sparks of one and the same fire. It is wrong to treat certain human

beings as untouchables from birth. It is also wrong to entertain false scruples about touching a dead body, which should be an object of pity and respect. It is only out of considerations of health that we bathe after handling a dead body, or after an application of oil, or a shave. A man who does not bathe in such cases may be looked upon as dirty, but surely not as a sinner. A mother may be "untouchable" so long as she has not bathed, or washed her hands and feet, after cleaning up her child's mess, but if a child happened to touch her, it would not be polluted by the touch.

But Bhangis, Dheds, Chamars and the like are contemptuously looked down upon as untouchables from birth. They may bathe for years with any amount of soap, dress well and wear the marks of *vaishnavas*, read the *Gita* every day and follow a learned profession and yet they remain untouchables. This is rank irreligion fit only to be destroyed. By treating removal of untouchability as an Ashram observance, we assert our belief that untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but a plague which it is the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. Every Hindu, therefore, who considers it a sin should atone for it by fraternizing with untouchables, associating with them in a spirit of love and service, deeming himself purified by such acts, redressing their grievances, helping them patiently to overcome ignorance and other evils due to the slavery of ages, and inspiring other Hindus to do likewise.

When one visualizes the removal of untouchability from this spiritual standpoint, its material and political results sink into insignificance, and we befriend the so-called untouchables regardless of such results. Seekers after Truth will never waste a thought on the material consequences of their quest, which is not a matter of policy

with them, but something inter-woven with the very texture of their lives.

When we have realized the supreme importance of this observance, we shall discover that the evil it seeks to combat is not restricted in its operation to the suppressed classes. Evil, no bigger than a mustard seed in the first instance, soon assumes gigantic proportions, and in the long run destroys that upon which it settles. Thus this evil has now assailed all departments of life. We have hardly enough time even to look after ourselves, thanks to the never-ending ablutions and exclusive preparation of food necessitated by false notions of untouchability. While pretending to pray to God, we offer worship not to God but to ourselves.

This observance, therefore, is not fulfilled merely by making friends with untouchables, but by loving all life as our own selves. Removal of untouchability means love for, and service of, the whole world, and thus merges into ahimsa. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barriers between man and man, and between the various orders of Being. We find such barriers erected everywhere in the world, but here we have been mainly concerned with the untouchability which has received religious sanction in India, and reduced lakhs and crores of human beings to a state of bordering on slavery...

25. Separate Electorates

...When they (Nationalist Muslims) tell me that separate electorates are bad for Musalmans, I must listen to them. They further claim that the Musalman masses do not want separate electorates. Be that as it may, I cannot identify

myself with any solution which is frankly based on communalism and yet has not what may be called unanimous support of the community concerned. A solution that is admittedly defective and anti-national must, to be acceptable, have the merit at least of almost unanimous support from those affected by it.

I am unable to understand the anger that is being shown against those who do not at once subscribe to the separate electorate idea. There is no doubt that it is possible for any large body of opinion to stop the country's march towards Swaraj. Swaraj based on non-violence cannot be obtained if it is resisted by even a respectable minority. It is wrong to say or suggest that under Swaraj there will be majority rule. In true Swaraj there can only be the rule of justice. In spite of the great awakening that has taken place, I for one would be content to wait if the accredited leaders of the Musalmans or the Sikhs would oppose the attainment of a Swaraj constitution. The fight for Swaraj once begun can only end when the constitution which is its visible symbol is framed and passed...

26. Varnas

... I have frequently said that I do not believe in caste in the modern sense. It is an excrescence and a handicap on progress. Nor do I believe in inequalities between human beings. We are all absolutely equal. But equality is of souls and not bodies. Hence, it is a mental state. We need to think of, and to assert, equality because we see great inequalities in the physical world. We have to realize equality in the midst of this apparent external inequality. Assumption of superiority by any person over any other

is a sin against God and man. Thus caste, in so far as it connotes distinctions in status, is an evil.

I do, however believe in *varna* which is based on hereditary occupations. *Varnas* are four to mark our universal occupations, imparting knowledge, defending the defenceless, carrying on agriculture and commerce and performing service through physical labour. These occupations are common to all mankind, but Hinduism, having recognized them as the law of our being, has made use of it in regulating social relations and conduct. Gravitation affects us all whether one knows its existence or not. But scientists who knew the law have made it yield results that have startled the world. Even so has Hinduism startled the world by its discovery and application of the law of *varna*. When Hindus were seized with inertia, abuse of *varna* resulted in innumerable castes with unnecessary and harmful restrictions as to inter-marriage and inter-dining. The law of *varna* has nothing to do with these restrictions. People of different *varnas* may inter-marry and inter-dine. These restrictions may be necessary in the interest of chastity and hygiene. But a Brahmin who marries a Shudra girl, or *vice versa*, commits no offence against the law of *varna*.

27. No Separate Electorate

... I would like to repeat what I have said before, that while the Congress will always accept any solution that may be acceptable to the Hindus, the Mohammedans and the Sikhs, Congress will be no party to special reservation or special electorates for any other minorities. The Congress will always endorse clauses or reservations as

to fundamental rights and civil liberty. It will be open to everybody to be placed on the voters' roll and to appeal to the common body of the electorates.

In my humble opinion, the proposition enunciated by Sir Hubert Carr is the very negation of responsible Government, the very negation of nationalism. If he says that, if you want a live European on the Legislature, then he must be elected by the Europeans themselves, well, Heaven help India if India has to have representatives elected by these several special cut-up groups. That European will serve India as a whole, and that European only, who commands the approval of the common electorate and not the mere Europeans. This very idea suggests that the responsible Government will always have to contend against these interests which will always be in conflict against the national spirit—against this body of 85 per cent of agricultural population. To me it is an unthinkable thing. If we are going to bring into being responsible Government and if we are going to get real freedom, then I venture to suggest that it should be the proud privilege and the duty of everyone of these so-called special classes to seek entry into the Legislatures through this open door, through the election and approval of the common body of electorates. You know that Congress is wedded to adult suffrage, and under adult suffrage it will be open to all to be placed on the voters' list. More than that nobody can ask...

I can understand the claims advanced by other minorities, but the claims advanced on behalf of the untouchables to me is the "unkindest cut of all". It means the perpetual bar-sinister. I would not sell the vital interests of the untouchables even for the sake of winning the freedom of India. I claim myself, in my own person, to represent the vast mass of the untouchables. Here I

speak not merely on behalf of the Congress, but I speak on my own behalf, and I claim that I would get, if there was a referendum of the untouchables, their vote, and that I would top the poll. And I would work from one end of India to the other to tell the untouchables that separate electorates and separate reservation is not the way to remove this bar-sinister, which is the shame, not of them, but of orthodox Hinduism.

Let this Committee and let the whole world know that today there is a body of Hindu reformers who are pledged to remove this blot of untouchability. We do not want on our register and on our census untouchables classified as a separate class. Sikhs may remain as such in perpetuity, so may Mohammedans, so may Europeans. Will untouchables remain untouchables in perpetuity? I would far rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived. Therefore, with all my regard for Dr. Ambedkar, and for his ability to see the untouchables uplifted, with all my regard for his ability, I must say in all humility, that here the great wrong under which he has laboured and, perhaps, the bitter experiences that he has undergone have for the moment warped his judgment. It hurts me to have to say this, but I would be untrue to the cause of untouchables, which is as dear to me as life itself, if I did not say it. I will not bargain away their rights for the kingdom of the whole world. I am speaking with a due sense of responsibility, and I say that it is not a proper claim which is registered by Dr. Ambedkar when he seeks to speak for the whole of the untouchables in India. It will create a division in Hinduism which I cannot possibly look forward to with any satisfaction whatsoever. I do not mind the untouchables, if they so desire, being converted to Islam or Christianity; I should tolerate that, but I cannot possibly tolerate what is in store for Hinduism

if there are two divisions set forth in the villages. Those who speak of the political rights of untouchables do not know their India, do not know how Indian society is today constructed, and therefore, I want to say with all the emphasis that I can command that, if I was the only person to resist this thing, I would resist it with my life.

28. Extract from Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare

Yeravda Central Prison,
11th March, 1932

Dear Sir Samuel,

You will perhaps recollect that at the end of my speech at the Round Table Conference when the minorities' claim was presented, I had said that I should resist with my life the grant of separate electorate to the Depressed Classes. This was not said in the heat of the moment, nor by way of rhetoric. It was meant to be a serious statement.

In pursuance of that statement, I had hoped on my return to India to mobilize public opinion against separate electorate, at any rate for the Depressed Classes. But it was not to be.

From the newspapers which I am permitted to read, I observe that any moment His Majesty's Government may declare their decision. At first I had thought that, if the decision was found to create separate electorates for the Depressed Classes, I should take such steps as I might then consider necessary to give effect to my vow. But I feel that it would be unfair to the British Government for me to act without giving previous notice. Naturally they could not attach the significance I give to my statement.

I need hardly reiterate all the objections I have to the creation of separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. I feel as if I was one of them. Their case stands on a wholly different footing from that of the others. I am not against their representation in the legislatures. I should favour every one of their adults, male or female, being registered as voters, irrespective of education or property qualifications, even though the franchise test may be stricter for the others. But I hold that separate electorate is harmful for them and for Hinduism, whatever it may be from a purely political standpoint. To appreciate the harm that separate electorates would do to them, one has to know how they are distributed amongst the so-called caste—Hindus, and how dependent they are on the latter. So far as Hinduism is concerned separate electorate would simply vivisect and disrupt it. For me the question of these classes is predominantly moral and religious. The political aspect, important though it is, dwindles into insignificance compared to the moral and religious issue. You will have to appreciate my feelings in this matter by remembering that I have been interested in the condition of these classes from my boyhood and have more than once staked my all for their sake. I say this not to pride myself in any way. For I feel that no penance that caste Hindus may do can, in any way, compensate for the calculated degradation to which they have consigned the Depressed Classes for centuries. But I know that separate electorate is neither penance nor any remedy for the crushing degradation they have groaned under.

I therefore respectfully inform His Majesty's Government that, in the event of their decision creating separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, I must fast unto death.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that such a step

whilst I am a prisoner must cause grave embarrassment to His Majesty's Government and that it will be regarded by many as highly improper on the part of one holding my position to introduce into the political field methods which they would describe as hysterical, if not much worse. All I can urge in defence is that for me the contemplated step is not a method, it is part of my being. It is a call of conscience which I dare not disobey, even though it may cost whatever reputation for sanity I may possess.

So far as I can see now, my discharge from imprisonment would not make the duty of fasting any the less imperative.

I am hoping, however, that all my fears are wholly unjustified and that the British Government have no intention whatever of creating separate electorate for the Depressed Classes...

Needless to say that from my side absolute secrecy has been maintained about all the correspondence I have carried on with you. Of course Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai, who has just been sent to join us, know all about it. But you will no doubt make whatever use you wish of this letter.

Yours sincerely
(Sd.) M.K. Gandhi

Sir Samuel Hoare
Whitehall
London

29. Wanted: A Living Pact

If people won't laugh at me, I would gently put forward a claim, which I have always asserted, that I am a 'touchable' by birth, but an 'untouchable' by choice, and I have endeavoured to qualify myself to represent, not the upper ten even among the 'untouchables', because be it said to their shame there are castes and classes among them, but my ambition is to represent and identify myself with, as far as possible, the lowest strata of 'untouchables', namely the 'invisibles' and the 'unapproachables', whom I have always before my mind's eye wherever I go; for they have indeed drunk deep of the poisoned cup. I have met them in Malabar and in Orissa, and am convinced that if they are ever to rise, it will not be by reservation of seats but will be by the strenuous work of Hindu reformers in their midst, and it is because I feel that this separation would have killed all prospect of reform that my whole soul has rebelled against it; and let me make it plain that the withdrawal of separate electorates will satisfy the letter of my vow, but will not satisfy the spirit behind it, and in my capacity of being a self-chosen 'untouchable', I am not going to rest content with a patched-up pact between 'touchables' and 'untouchables'.

What I want, what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for, is the eradication of untouchability root and branch. I want, therefore, a living pact whose life-giving effect should be felt not in the distant tomorrow, but today, and therefore, that pact should be sealed by an all-India demonstration of the 'touchables' and 'untouchables' meeting together, not by way of a theatrical show, but in real brotherly embrace. It is in order to achieve this, the dream of my life for the past fifty years, that I

have entered today the fiery gates. The British Government's decision was the last straw. It was a decisive symptom, and with the unerring eye of the physician that I claim to be in such matters, I detected the symptom. Therefore, for me the abolition of separate electorates would be but the beginning of the end, and I would warn all those leaders assembled at Bombay and others against coming to any hasty decision.

My life I count of no consequence. One hundred lives given for this noble cause would, in my opinion, be poor penance done by Hindus for the atrocious wrongs they have heaped upon helpless men and women of their own faith. I, therefore, would urge them not to swerve an inch from the path of strictest justice. My fast I want to throw in the scales of justice, and if it wakes up the caste Hindus from their slumber, and if they are roused to a sense of their duty, it will have served its purpose. Whereas, if out of blind affection for me, they would somehow or other come to a rough-and-ready agreement so as to secure the abrogation and then go off to sleep, they will commit a grievous blunder and will have made my life a misery. For, while the abrogation of separate electorates would result in my breaking the fast, it would be a living death for me if the vital pact for which I am striving is not arrived at. It would simply mean that, as soon as I called off the fast, I would have to give notice of another in order to achieve the spirit of the vow to the fullest extent.

This may look childish to the onlooker but not so to me. If I had anything more to give, I would throw that in also to remove this curse, but I have nothing more than my life.

I believe that if untouchability is really rooted out, it will not only purge Hinduism of a terrible blot but its

repercussion will be world wide. My fight against untouchability is a fight against the impure in humanity.

30. Degradation of All

Untouchability as it is practised in Hinduism today is, in my opinion, a sin against God and man and is, therefore like a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. In my opinion, it has no sanction whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras taken as a whole. Untouchability of a healthy kind is undoubtedly to be found in the Shastras and it is universal in all religions. It is a rule of sanitation. That will exist to the end of time; but untouchability as we are observing today in India is a hideous thing and wears various forms in various provinces, even in districts. It has degraded both the 'untouchables' and the 'touchables'. It has stunted the growth of nearly 40 million human beings. They are denied even the ordinary amenities of life. The sooner, therefore, it is ended, the better for Hinduism, the better for India and, perhaps, the better for mankind in general.

31. No Antagonism

. . . Untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. It is a canker eating into its vitals. I see with my eyes and smell with my nose that the body of Hinduism is in the process of destruction. If you think with me, you should contribute your mite to this cause. Once we lose the spiritual power of Hinduism, I do not know where we should be. A man

without religion is like a ship without a rudder. . .

. . . I would like to say in all humility, but with perfect confidence, that I have taken up this movement in no spirit of antagonism to any other religion or community. It would be impossible for any person to point to a single act of mine during the past 50 years which could be proved to have been antagonistic to any person or community. I have never believed anyone to be my enemy. My faith demands that I should consider no one as such. I may not wish ill to anything that lives. It is my certain conviction that, if the Hindu heart is completely purged of the taint of untouchability, the event will have its inevitable influence not only upon all the communities in India but on the whole world. This belief is daily becoming stronger. I cannot remove from my heart untouchability regarding several millions of human beings and harbour it towards some other millions. The very act of the Hindu heart getting rid of distinctions of high and low must cure us of mutual jealousies and distrusts of and among other communities. It is for that reason that I have staked my life on this issue. In fighting this battle against untouchability I am fighting for unity not only between Hindu touchables and Hindu untouchables but among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all other different religious communities. . .

32. Far-Reaching Consequences

...I have said more than once that, if untouchability is removed in its fullness from the Hindu heart, it will have far-reaching consequences, in as much as it touches millions of human beings. As I said last night to the great

meeting in Nagpur, if untouchability is really removed from the Hindu heart, that is, if the high-caste Hindus purge themselves of this terrible taint, we shall soon discover that we are all one and not different peoples. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, whatever we may call ourselves, we shall feel this unity once the barrier of untouchability is removed. As I have often said, untouchability is a hydraheaded-monster, appearing in many shapes, some of them are very subtle. If I have jealousy for any human being, that also is a species of untouchability. I do not know if my dream about the removal of untouchability will be fully realized while I am living. All those who are religiously inclined, those who believe not in formal religion but in the essence of religion, cannot but believe in the removal of a subtle type of untouchability that affects the lives of a vast mass of humanity. If Hindus hearts can be purged of this evil, our eyes of understanding will be more and more opened. It is not possible to estimate the gain to humanity when untouchability is really removed. You can now have no difficulty in understanding why I have staked my life for this one thing.

33. After the Proclamation

. . . The Maharaja has given you a *Smriti*, but it is for you to carry it out and breathe life into it, and you will hopelessly fail to do that unless you rise to the occasion and see to it that this religious spirit pervades the whole of Travancore, both *avarnas* and *savarnas*. I tell you if you approach this great step, each with his own mental reservation, and not give effect to it whole-heartedly, you

will find this proclamation a nine days' wonder. Therefore, I want you to understand whilst you are properly rejoicing over this proclamation and celebrating it with the joy and zeal that I see on your faces, that you will not be doing your duty if you do not realize your responsibility to the whole of the community that had been so far excluded.

I see that you are now getting restless. I do not propose to keep you longer than in absolutely necessary. I am speaking to you from the fullness of my heart, and when heart is speaking to hearts, it expects to find a lodgment in those hearts. . . I do not want to keep you more than perhaps ten minutes now. I shall try to omit many of the things I wanted to say this evening, and shall seek another occasion for doing so.

I must mention what I saw at the great Padmanabha temple. It will perhaps best illustrate what I am saying about the pure and spiritual revival. In the days of my youth, I went to so many temples with the faith and devotion with which my parents had fired me. But of late years I have not been visiting temples, and ever since I have been engaged in anti-untouchability work I have refrained from going to temples unless they were open to everyone called untouchable. So what I saw this morning at the temple dawned upon me with the same newness with which it must have dawned upon so many *avarna* Hindus who must have gone to the temple after the Proclamation. In imagination my mind travelled back to the pre-historic centuries when they began to convey the message of God in stone and metal. I saw quite clearly that the priest who was interpreting each figure in his own choice Hindi did not want to tell me that each of these figures was God. But without giving me that particular interpretation he made me realize that these temples were so many bridges between the unseen,

invisible and indefinable God and ourselves, who are infinitesimal drops in the Infinite Ocean. We the human family are not all philosophers. We are of the earth very earthy, and are not satisfied with contemplating the invisible God. Somehow or other, we want something which we can touch, something we can see, something before which we can kneel down. It does not matter whether it is a book or an empty stone building, or a stone building inhabited by numerous figures. A book will satisfy some, an empty building will satisfy some others, and many others will not be satisfied unless they see something inhabiting these empty buildings. Then I ask you to approach these temples not as if they represented a body of superstitions. If you approach these temples with faith in them, you will know each time you visit them you will come away from them purified, and with your faith more and more in the living God.

Anyway, I have looked upon this proclamation as a pure religious act. I have regarded this visit to Travancore in the spirit of pilgrimage, and I am going to these temples as an untouchable suddenly made touchable. If all of you will approach this proclamation in this spirit, you will abolish all distinctions between *savarnas* and *avarnas* as also all those distinctions which unfortunately still exist between *savarnas* and *avarnas*. Finally you will not be satisfied until you have lifted up your brothers and sisters who are supposed to be the least and the lowest to heights which you have attained yourselves. True spiritual regeneration must include the economic uplift and the removal of ignorance and everything that goes to retard human progress.

May God enable you to realize to the full the great possibilities that are embedded in this proclamation of the Maharaja. I thank you for giving me this patient hearing.

34. Road to Swaraj

At this time of day it is unnecessary to dilate upon the necessity of the removal of this blot and curse upon Hinduism. Congressmen have certainly done much in this matter. But I am sorry to have to say that many Congressmen have looked upon this item as a mere political necessity and not as something indispensable, so far as Hindus are concerned, for the very existence of Hinduism. If Hindu Congressmen take up the cause for its own sake, they will influence the so-called *Sanatanis* far more extensively than they have hitherto done. They should approach them not in a militant spirit but, as befits their non-violence in a spirit of friendliness. And so far as the *Harijans* are concerned, every Hindu should make common cause with them and befriend them in their awful isolation – such isolation as perhaps the world has never seen in the monstrous immensity one witnesses in India. I know from experience how difficult the task is. But it is part of the task of building the edifice of Swaraj. And the road to Swaraj is steep and narrow. There are many slippery ascents and many deep chasms. They have all to be negotiated with unfaltering step before we can reach the summit and breathe the fresh air of freedom.

35. Service to Adivasis

Service of *adivasis* is also a part of the constructive programme. Though they are the sixteenth number in this programme, they are not the least in point of importance. Our country is so vast and the races so varied that the

best of us cannot know all there is to know of men and their condition. As one discovers this for oneself, one realizes how difficult it is to make good our claim to be one nation unless every unit has a living consciousness of being one with every other.

The *adivasis* are over two crores in all India. Bapa began work among the Bhils years ago in Gujarat. In about 1940, Shri Balasaheb Kher threw himself with his usual zeal into this much-needed service in the Thana District. He is now President of the Adivasi Seva Mandal.

There are several such other workers in other parts of India and yet they are too few. Truly, "the harvest is rich but the labourers are few". Who can deny that all such service is not merely humanitarian but solidly national, and brings us nearer to true independence?

36. Ati-Sudras by Choice

Caste distinctions have taken such deep root amongst us that they have also infected the Muslims, Christians and followers of other religions in India. It is true that class barriers are also to be found in more or less degree in other parts of the world. This means that it is a distemper common to the human race. It can be eliminated only by the inculcation of religion in its true sense. I have not found sanction for such barriers and distinctions in the scriptures of any religion.

In the eye of religion all men are equal. Learning, intellect or riches do not entitle one to claim superiority over those who are lacking in these. If any person is suffused and sanctified with the purifying essence and the discipline of true religion, he regards himself under

the obligation to share his advantages with those who have fewer. That being so, in our present fallen state, true religion requires us all to become *ati-sudras* by choice.

IV. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

37. Unity is Strength

That unity is strength is not merely a copybook maxim but a rule of life is in no case so clearly illustrated as in the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. Divided we must fall. Any third power may easily enslave India so long as we Hindus and Musalmans are ready to cut each other's throats. Hindu-Muslim unity means not unity only between Hindus and Musalmans but between all those who believe India to be their home, no matter to what faith they belong.

38. The Law of Friendship

... There must always be two sides for a dispute to arise. When one party commits an error, it behoves the other to remain calm. Only then can Hindu-Muslim unity survive. To remain good provided the other side remains good—this is no law of friendship, nor of war. It is but a bargain. In friendship, there is no room for bargaining. Friendship can exist only between brave parties and bargaining between weak parties. We are both weak and strong.

Consequently, the relationship of Hindus and Muslims is both one of friendship and of bargaining. Let us hope that, day by day, the element of bargaining will disappear and that of friendship grow. If one side progressively purifies itself and becomes stronger, this friendship will become permanent.

Bravery does not mean browbeating others. He is not a brave man who uses his strength to terrorize others. The brave man is he who, though possessing strength, does not use it to intimidate others but, on the contrary, protects the weak. Can a brave man know fear? Muslims are physically strong. Even if they have the support of the whole world, Hindus should not be afraid of them, but, placing their trust in God, should refrain from deviating, by a hair's breadth, from the path of justice. Muslims, too, should be ashamed to seek help from outside and should trust the Hindus despite the latter's numerical superiority. However, even if both sides do not act in this civilized manner and only one side does so, there need be no disruption of Hindu-Muslim unity. That is, even if one side is firm in doing its dharma, there will be no enmity between the two. He alone may be said to be firm in his dharma who trusts his safety to God and, untroubled by anxiety, follows the path of virtue. If Hindus apply this rule to the Moplah affair, they will not, even when they see the error of the Moplahs, accuse the Muslims. They will enable them to stand on their feet.

Swaraj means that even if a person is in a minority of one, he may oppose the rest and be unafraid. Hindus should not depend wholly on the Muslim's good sense. Nor should the Muslims be frightened by the meanness of some Hindus. Each community should rely on its own strength and help the other. Why should a single Hindu have run away on account of the Moplahs' atrocities? Why

should even one Hindu have reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs out of fear to the British troops? No Hindu was bound to report where the Moplahs had taken shelter. Why should a single Hindu have made a show of going through Islamic religious rites out of fear of the Moplahs? The rule which we follow in our fight against the British rule, viz., laying down our lives, should be followed in all cases of oppression. If we are ready to die at the hands of the tyrant rather than do his bidding, we shall be stronger than even the lion. Anyone who overpowers a tyrant by killing him will one day be tempted to become a tyrant himself, for, instead of looking to God for support, he will have learnt to depend on his own brute strength. A person who regards himself as God is bound to be destroyed. He can never be free because he has sought to usurp God's place and, in consequence, has lost his own rightful place. He has yet to strive and know what he is.

39. Statement Announcing 21-Day Fast

The recent events have proved unbearable for me. My helplessness is still more unbearable. My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray. I have done so in connection with my dearest ones. Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of 21 days commencing from today and ending on Wednesday, October 8. I reserve the liberty to drink water with or without salt. It is both a penance and a prayer.

As a penance, I need not have taken the public into my confidence, but I publish the fast as (let me hope) an

effective prayer both to Hindus and Musalmans, who have hitherto worked in unison, not to commit suicide. I respectfully invite the heads of all the communities, including Englishmen, to meet and end this quarrel which is a disgrace to religion and to humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts.

40. All About the Fast

I wish to assure the reader that the fast has not been undertaken without deliberation. As a matter of fact my life has been a stake ever since the birth of non-cooperation. I did not blindly embark upon it. I had ample warning of the dangers attendant upon it. No act of mine is done without prayer. Man is a fallible being. He can never be sure of his steps. What he may regard as answer to prayer may be an echo of his pride. For infallible guidance man has to have a perfectly innocent heart incapable of evil. I can lay no such claim. Mine is a struggling, striving, erring, imperfect soul. But I can rise only by experimenting upon myself and others. I believe in the absolute oneness of God and, therefore, also of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot therefore, detach myself from the wickedest soul (nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous). Whether, therefore, I will or no, I must involve in my experiment the whole of my kind. Nor can I do without experiment. Life is but an endless series of experiments . . .

I was violently shaken by Amethi, Shambha and

Gulbarga. I had read the reports about Amethi and Shambha prepared by Hindu and Musalman friends. I had learnt the joint findings of Hindu and Musalman friends who went to Gulbarga. I was writhing in deep pain and yet I had no remedy. The news of Kohat set the smouldering mass aflame. Something had got to be done. I passed two nights in restlessness and pain. On Wednesday I knew the remedy. I must do penance. In the Satyagraha Ashram at the time of morning prayer we ask Shiva, God of Mercy, to forgive our sins knowingly or unknowingly committed. My penance is the prayer of a bleeding heart for forgiveness for sins unwittingly committed.

It is a warning to the Hindus and Musalmans who have professed to love me. If they have loved me truly and if I have been deserving of their love, they will do penance with me for the grave sin of denying God in their hearts. To revile one another's religion, to make reckless statements, to utter untruth, to break the heads of innocent men, to desecrate temples or mosques, is a denial of God. The world is watching – some with glee and some with sorrow – the dogfight that is proceeding in our midst. We have listened to Satan. Religion – call it by what you like – is made of sterner stuff. The penance of Hindus and Musalmans is not fasting but retracing their steps. It is true penance for a Musalman to harbour no ill-will for his Hindu brother and an equally true penance for a Hindu to harbour none for his Musalman brother.

I ask of no Hindu or Musalman to surrender an iota of his religious principle. Only let him be sure that it is religion. But I do ask of every Hindu and Musalman not to fight for an earthly gain. I should be deeply hurt if my fast made either community surrender on a matter of principle. My fast is a matter between God and myself . .

It has been whispered that by being so much with Musalman friends, I make myself unfit to know the Hindu mind. The Hindu mind is myself. Surely I do not need to live amidst Hindus to know the Hindu mind when every fibre of my being is Hindu. My Hinduism must be a very poor thing, if it cannot flourish under influences the most adverse. I know instinctively what is necessary for Hinduism. But I must labour to discover the Musalman mind. The closer I come to the best of Musalmans, the juster I am likely to be in my estimate of the Musalmans and their doings. I am striving to become the best cement between the two communities. My longing is to be able to cement the two with my blood, if necessary. But, before I can do so, I must prove to the Musalmans that I love them as well as I love the Hindus. My religion teaches me to love all equally. May God help me to do so. My fast is, among other things meant to qualify me for achieving that equal and selfless love.

41. Statement Before Breaking Fast

Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new interest with me. It has been my chief concern for 30 years. But I have not succeeded in achieving it. I do not know what is the will of God. You know how originally my vow consisted of two parts. One of them is fulfilled. Another part I held back in response to the wishes of friends who were present at Mr. Mahomed Ali's house that night. Even if I had retained this second part, my fast would now have been broken in view of the success of the Unity Conference.

Today I beseech you to promise that you will, if

necessary, lay down your life for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. For me, Hinduism would be meaningless if that unity is not achieved, and I make bold to say the same thing about Islam. We ought to be able to live together. The Hindus must be able to offer their worship in perfect freedom in their temples, and so should Musalmans be able to say their *azan* and prayer with equal freedom in their mosques. If we cannot ensure this elemental freedom of worship, then neither Hinduism nor Islam has any meaning. I want this promise from you, and I know I have it; but as I am about to break my fast, I am so weighed down with the sense of responsibility that I am asking you to renew the pledge.

42. Solution to Communal Problem

I urge you then to read that writing on the wall. I ask you not to try the patience of a people known to be proverbially patient. We speak of the mild Hindu; and the Musalman also, by contact, good or evil with the Hindu, has himself become mild. And that mention of the Musalman brings me to the baffling problem of minorities. Believe me, that problem exists here, and I repeat what I used to say in India – I have not forgotten those words – that, without the problem of minorities being solved, there is no Swaraj for India, there is no freedom for India. I know that; I realize it; and yet I came here in the hope perchance that I might be able to pull through a solution here. But I do not despair of some day or other finding a real and living solution in connection with the minorities' problem. I repeat what I have said elsewhere that so long as the wedge in the shape of foreign

rule divides community from community and class from class, there will be no real living solution, there will be no living friendship between these communities.

It will be after all and at best a paper solution. But immediately you withdraw that wedge, the domestic ties, the domestic affections, the knowledge of common birth – do you suppose that all these will count for nothing?

Were the Hindus and Musalmans and Sikhs always at war with one another when there was no British rule, when there was no English face seen in India? We have chapter and verse given to us by Hindu historians and by Musalman historians to say that we were living in comparative peace even then. And Hindus and Musalmans in the villages are not even today quarrelling. In those days they were not known to quarrel at all. The late Maulana Muhammad Ali often used to tell me, and he was himself a bit of an historian. He told: "If God" – "Allah," as he called God – "gives me life, I propose to write the history of Musalman rule in India; and then I will show, through documents that British people have preserved, that Aurengzeb was not so vile as he has been painted by the British historian; that the Mogul rule was not so bad as it has been shown to us in British history" and so on. And so have Hindu historians written. This quarrel is not old, this quarrel is co-eval with this acute shame. I dare to say it is co-eval with the British advent; and immediately this relationship, the unfortunate, artificial, unnatural relationship between Great Britain and India is transformed into a natural relationship, when it becomes, if it does become, a voluntary partnership to be given up, to be dissolved, at the will of either party, when it becomes that you will find that the Hindus, Musalmans, Sikhs, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Christians and untouchables, will all live together as one man.

43. "Pray For Me"

. . . I have more than once heard the complaint that the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity is being delayed owing to lack of sufficient effort in its behalf on my part, that if only I would concentrate myself on it exclusively it could be realized today. May I assure you that if I do not *seem* to be doing that today, it is not because my passion for Hindu-Muslim unity has grown less. But I have realized as I had never done before my own imperfection as an instrument for this high mission and the inadequacy of mere external means for the attainment of big objects. I have learnt more and more to resign myself utterly to His grace.

If you could dissect my heart, you would find that the prayer and spiritual striving for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity goes on there unceasingly all the twenty-four hours without even a moment's interruption, whether I am awake or asleep. I want Hindu-Muslim unity if only because I know that without it there can be no Swaraj. Let no one imagine that because the Hindus constitute the majority community they can win Swaraj for India or even for themselves by organizing civil disobedience without the backing or support of the other communities. Civil Disobedience of the purest type, as I have often repeated, can be effective even if it is confined to a few. But then these few must represent in their persons the united will and strength of the whole nation. Is it not the same in armed warfare? The fighting forces need the backing and cooperation of the entire civil population. Without it they would be crippled. I must be impatient for Hindu-Muslim unity because I am impatient for Swaraj. And I have full faith that true and lasting heart

unity between Hindus and Musalmans, not a merely patched-up political compromise, will come sooner or later, sooner perhaps than later. That dream has filled my being since my earliest childhood. I have the vividest recollection of my father's days, how the Hindus and Musalmans of Rajkot used to mix together and participate in one another's domestic functions and ceremonies like blood-brothers. I believe that those days will dawn once again over this country. The present bickerings and petty recriminations between the communities are an unnatural aberration. They cannot last forever.

The greatest of things in this world are accomplished not through unaided human effort. They come in their own good time. God has His own way of choosing His instruments. Who knows, in spite of my incessant heart prayer I may not be found worthy for this great work. We must all keep our loins girt and our lamps well trimmed; we do not know when or on whom His choice may fall. You may not shirk your responsibility by shoving it all on me. Pray for me that my dream may be fulfilled in my life time. We must never give way to despair or pessimism. God's ways are more than man's arithmetic.

44. His Vision

Before I ever knew anything of politics in my early youth, I dreamt the dream of communal unity of the heart. I shall jump in the evening of my life, like a child, to feel that the dream has been realized in this life. The wish for living the full span of life portrayed by the seers of old and which they permit us to set down at 125 years, will then revive. Who would not risk sacrificing his life for the realization

of such a dream? Then we shall have real Swaraj. Then though legally and geographically we may still be two States, in daily life no one will think that we were separate States. The vista before me seems to me to be, as it must be to you, too glorious to be true. Yet like a child in a famous picture, drawn by a famous painter, I shall not be happy till I have got it. I live and want to live for no lesser goal. Let the seekers from Pakistan help me to come as near the goal as it is humanly possible. A goal ceases to be one, when it is reached. The nearest approach is always possible. What I have said holds good irrespective of whether others do it or not. It is open to every individual to purify himself or herself so as to render him or her fit for that land of promise. I remember to have read, I forget whether in the Delhi Fort or the Agra Fort, when I visited them in 1896, a verse on one of the gates, which when translated reads: 'If there is paradise on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here.' That fort with all its magnificence at its best, was no paradise in my estimation. But I should love to see that verse with justice inscribed on the gates of Pakistan at all the entrances. In such paradise, whether it is in the Indian Union or in Pakistan, there will be neither paupers nor beggars, nor high nor low, neither millionaire employers nor half-starved employees, nor intoxicating drinks or drugs. There will be the same respect for women as vouchsafed to men and the chastity and purity of men and women will be jealously guarded. Where every woman except one's wife, will be treated by men of all religions, as mother, sister or daughter according to her age. Where there will be no untouchability and where there will be equal respect for all faiths. They will be all proudly, joyously and voluntarily bread labourers. I hope everyone who listens to me or reads these lines will forgive me if stretched on my bed and basking in the sun, inhaling

life-giving sunshine, I allow myself to indulge in this ecstasy. Let this assure the doubtless and skeptics that I have not the slightest desire that the fast should be ended as quickly as possible. It matters little if the ecstatic wishes of a fool like me are never realized and the fast is never broken. I am content to wait as long as it may be necessary, but it will hurt me to think that people have acted merely in order to save me. I claim that God has inspired this fast and it will be broken only when and if he wishes it. No human agency has ever been known to thwart, nor will it ever thwart, Divine Will.

V. LANGUAGE

45. Our Duty

The question of language presents a big and indeed a very important problem. Even if all the leaders were to devote themselves entirely to this task, turning away from everything else, they well may. If, on the other hand, we were to regard it as of secondary importance only and to direct our attention away from it, then all the enthusiasm which people now feel for it and the keen interest they are taking in it at present would be in vain.

Language is like our mother. But we do not have that love for it, as we have for our mother. In fact I have no real interest in this sort of a conference. It will be a three day's pageant after which we shall disperse, go away to our respective places and forget all that we said and heard. What is needed is the urge and the resolve to do things. The president's speech cannot give you that urge. It is something which you have to create for yourselves. One of the charges made against us is that our language lacks spirit. Where there is no knowledge there is no spirit. We have neither the urge to know nor to do things. It is only when we acquire dynamic energy that our people and our language also will acquire it. We cannot get the freedom we want through a foreign language for the simple reason that we are not able to use it effectively. I

am pleased to know that in Indore you carry on all your dealings through Hindi. But—excuse me please—the letter I have received from your Chief Minister is in English. The people of Indore perhaps do not know—but I will tell them—that here the courts entertain petitions written in Hindi, but strangely enough the pleaders conduct their arguments and the judges deliver their judgments in English. I ask why it should be so in Indore. I admit that this movement—the movement for the adoption of Hindi—cannot yet succeed in British India, there is no reason why it should not succeed in the Indian States. The educated classes, as Pandit Malaviyaji has pointed out in his letter, have unfortunately fallen under the spell of English and have developed a distaste for their own mother tongue. The milk one gets from the former is adulterated with water and contaminated with poison, while that from the latter is pure. It is impossible to make any advance without this pure milk. But a blind person cannot see and a slave does not know how to break his fetters. We have been living under the spell of English now for the past fifty years. In the result our people have remained steeped in ignorance. The Conference must give special attention to this part of the problem. We should see that within a year conditions are created when not a word of English will be heard in any of our provincial assemblies and the like. Let us abandon the use of English entirely. English has attained the position of a universal language. But that is because the English have spread and established themselves throughout the world. As soon as they lose that position, English will also shrink in its extent. We should no more neglect and thus destroy our own language. The English insist on speaking their mother tongue and using it for all their purposes. Let us do the same and thus raise Hindi

to the high status of a national language. Only thus shall we discharge our duty to it . . .

46. Learn Hindi

I have suggested another thing. You and I, and every one of us, has neglected the true education that we should have received in our national schools. It is impossible for the young men of Bengal, for the young men of Gujarat, for the young men of the Deccan, to go to the Central Provinces, to go to the United Provinces, to go to the Punjab and all those vast tracts of India which speak nothing but Hindustani, and therefore I ask you to learn Hindustani also in your leisure hours—the hours that you may be able to save after spinning. And if you will learn these things you can learn both spinning and Hindustani in two months. An intelligent, gentle lad, a patriotic and hard-working lad, I promise you, can learn both these in two months' time. And then you are free to go out to your villages—you are free to go to every part of India but Madras, and be able to speak your mind to the masses. Do not consider for one moment that you can possibly make English a common medium of expression between the masses. Twenty-two crores of Indians know Hindustani—they do not know any other language. And if you want to steal into the hearts of 22 crores of Indians, Hindustani is the only language open to you. If you will do but these two things, during this year, during these nine months, believe me, you will have, by the time you have finished, acquired courage and acquired strength which you do not possess today. I know thousands of students—black despair stares them in the face if they are

told that they cannot get Government employ. If you are bent upon ending or mending this Government how do you propose to get Government employ? If you do not want to fall back upon Government, what is your English knowledge worth? I do not wish to underrate the literary value of the English language. I do not wish to underrate the vast treasures that are buried in the English books. I do not want to suggest to you that we have overrated the importance of the English language but I do venture to suggest to you that the English language finds very little place in the economy of Swaraj.

47. Sanskrit

My view is that Sanskrit should be used in all Hindu religious ceremonies. However good a translation, it cannot give us the meaning which lies in the sounds of certain words in the original. Moreover, by translating into regional languages, and remaining content with such translations, verses which belong to a language which has acquired a certain refinement over thousands of years and in which those verses have always been recited, we diminish the air of solemnity which attaches to them. But I have no doubt at all in my mind that the meaning of every verse and every step in the ceremony should be explained in their own language to the people for whose benefit they are being recited or performed. It is also my view that the education of every Hindu is incomplete without an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit. I simply cannot conceive the continued existence of Hinduism without a widespread knowledge of Sanskrit. The language has been made difficult by the type of

curriculum we follow in teaching it; in itself it is not difficult at all. Even if it is, the practice of dharma is still more difficult and, therefore, to those who wish to follow it in life the means of doing so should seem easy, however difficult they may actually be.

48. Hindi—Our National Language

Though I consider these Southern languages to be daughters of Sanskrit they are different from Hindi, Oriya, Bengali, Assamese, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marathi and Gujarati. Their grammar is totally different from Hindi. In describing them as the daughters of Sanskrit, I only mean that they have a large number of Sanskrit words in their vocabulary and when they are in difficulty, they go to Sanskrit as to a mother—they seek her help and receive from her in the form of new words the requisite nourishment. They might have been independent in the olden days but now they are enriching themselves with words taken from Sanskrit. There are many other reasons also why they should be regarded as the daughters of Sanskrit. But we may not go into them here . . .

I have always held that in no case whatsoever do we want to injure, much less suppress or destroy, the provincial languages. We want only that all should learn Hindi as a common medium for interprovincial intercourse. This does not mean that we have any undue partiality for Hindi. We regard Hindi as our national language. It is fit to be adopted as such. That language alone can become the national language which is spoken by the majority of the people and which is easy to learn. To our knowledge there has been no opposition to this

view serious enough to take notice of . . .

If Hindi takes the place of English, I for one would be pleased. But we know well the importance of the English language. Knowledge of English is necessary to us for the acquisition of modern knowledge, for the study of modern literature, for knowledge of the world, for intercourse with the present rulers and such other purposes. As things are, we have to learn English even if we do not wish to. English is an international language.

But English can never become our national language. True, it seems to dominate the scene today. In spite of all efforts to resist its hold on us, it continues to occupy a large place in the conduct of our national affairs. But this should not lead us to entertain the illusion that it is going to become our national language.

We can easily find proof for this from our experience in any province. Take for instance Bengal or South India where we find influence of English to be the largest. Should we want anything done in these parts by the people, we cannot have it done through English, though at the moment we may also not be able to do it through Hindi. With the help of a few words of Hindi, however, we may succeed in expressing our meaning at least to some extent; but through English not even this much.

Of course, it may be accepted that hitherto no language has been able to establish itself as the national language. English is the official language. That is natural under the prevailing circumstances. But I consider it quite impossible for it to go beyond this. If we want to make India one nation, whether one believes it or not, Hindi alone can be the national language for the simple reason that no other language can hope to have the advantages enjoyed by Hindi. With some slight variations Hindi-

Hindustani is the language spoken by about twenty-two crores of people, both Hindus and Muslims.

Therefore the most proper and under the circumstances the only possible thing would be to use the language of the province in the province, to use Hindi for all-India purposes and to use English for international purposes. While the Hindi-speaking people may be counted in crores, the number of those who speak English can never be increased to more than a few lakhs. Even the attempt to do so would be unjust to the people.

49. All-India Nationalism

There is nothing wrong in making a knowledge of Hindustani compulsory, if we are sincere in our declarations that Hindustani is or is to be the *Rashtrabhasha* or the common medium of expression. Latin was and probably still is compulsory in English schools. The study did not interfere with the study of English. On the contrary English was enriched by a knowledge of the noble language. The cry of "mother tongue in danger" is either ignorant or hypocritical. And where it is sincere it speaks little for the patriotism of those who will grudge our children an hour per day for Hindustani. We must break through the provincial crust if we are to reach the core of all-India nationalism. Is India one country and one nation or many countries and many nations? . . .

50. All-India Common Speech

Our love of the English language in preference to our own mother tongue has caused a deep chasm between the educated and politically-minded classes and the masses. The languages of India have suffered impoverishment. We flounder when we make the vain attempt to express abstruse thought in the mother tongue. There are no equivalents for scientific terms. The result has been disastrous. The masses remain cut off from the modern mind. We are too near our times correctly to measure the disservice caused to India by this neglect of its great languages. It is easy enough to understand that, unless we undo the mischief, the mass mind must remain imprisoned. The masses can make no solid contribution to the construction of Swaraj. It is inherent in Swaraj based on non-violence that every individual makes his own direct contribution to the Independence movement. The masses cannot do this fully unless they understand every step with all its implications. This is impossible unless every step is explained in their own languages.

And then for all-India interaction we need, from among the Indian stock, a language which the largest number of people already know and understand and which the others can easily pick up. This language is indisputably Hindi. It is spoken and understood by both Hindus and Muslims of the North. It is called Urdu when it is written in the Urdu characters. The Congress, in its famous resolution passed at the Cawnpur session in 1925, called this all-India speech Hindustani. And since that time, in theory at least, Hindustani has been the *Rashtrabhasa*. I say "in theory" because even Congressmen have not practiced it as they should have. In 1920 a

deliberate attempt was begun to recognize the importance of Indian languages for the political education of the masses, as also of an all-India common speech which politically-minded India could easily speak and which Congressmen from the different provinces could understand at all-India gatherings of the Congress. Such a national language should enable one to understand and speak both forms of speech and write in both the scripts.

I am sorry to have to say that many Congressmen have failed to carry out that resolution. And so we have, in my opinion, the shameful spectacle of Congressmen insisting on speaking in English and compelling others to do likewise for their sakes. The spell that English has cast on us is not yet broken. Being under it, we are impeding the progress of India towards her goal. Our love of the masses must be skin-deep if we will not take the trouble of spending over learning Hindustani as many months as the years we spend over learning English.

51. Linguistic Redistribution of States

. . . The Congress had already adopted that principle [of reconstruction of provinces on a linguistic basis] and had declared its intention to give effect to it constitutionally as soon as they came to power as such redistribution would be conducive to the cultural advancement of the country. But such redistribution should not militate against the organic unity of India. Autonomy did not and should not mean disruption, or that hereafter provinces could go the way they chose, independent of one another and of the Centre. If each province begins to look upon itself as a separate, sovereign unit, India's independence will lose

its meaning and with it will vanish the freedom of the various units as well . . .

The world outside does not know them as Gujaratis, Maharashtrians, Tamilians etc., but only as Indians. We must, therefore, resolutely discourage all fissiparious tendencies and feel and behave as Indians. Subject to this paramount consideration, a linguistic redistribution of provinces should give an impetus to education and trade.

VI. ECNONOMIC EQUALITY

52. Identification with the Masses

. . . The Congress must progressively represent the masses. They are as yet untouched by politics. They have no political consciousness of the type our politicians desire. Their politics are confined to bread and salt—I dare not say butter, for millions do not know the taste of ghee or even oil. Their politics are confined to communal adjustments. It is right however to say that we the politicians do represent the masses in opposition to the Government. But if we begin to use them before they are ready, we shall cease to represent them. We must first come in living touch with them by working for them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and anticipate their wants. With the pariahs we must be pariahs and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their table thrown at us. We must see how we like being in the boxes, miscalled houses, of the labourers of Bombay. We must identify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots and in which their cattle drink and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses and they will, as surely as I am

writing this, respond to every call.

"We cannot all do this, and if we are to do this, good-bye to swaraj for a thousand years and more," some will say. I shall sympathize with the objection. But I do claim that some of us at least will have to go through the agony and out of it only will a nation full, vigorous and free be born. I suggest to all that they should give their mental co-operation and that they should mentally identify themselves with the masses, and as a visible and tangible token thereof, they should earnestly spin for at least thirty minutes per day in their name and for their sake. It will be a mighty prayer from the intelligentsia among the Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Christians and others of India, rising upto heaven for their, that is, India's deliverance.

53. Economic Independence

Let there be no mistake about my conception of swaraj. It is complete independence of alien control and complete economic independence. So at one end you have political independence, at the other the economic. It has two other ends. One of them is moral and social, the corresponding end is *dharma*, that is, religion in the highest sense of the term. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc., but is superior to them all. You may recognize it by the name of Truth, not the honesty of expediency but the living Truth that pervades everything and will survive all destruction and all transformation. The moral and social uplift may be recognized by the term we are used to, that is, non-violence. Let us call this the square of swaraj, which will be out of shape if any of its angles is untrue. In the

language of the Congress, we cannot achieve this political and economic freedom without truth and non-violence or, in concrete terms, without a living faith in God and hence moral and social elevation.

By political independence, I do not mean a mere imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their own genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as Ram Raj, that is, sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. The Congress constitutions of Nagpur and Bombay, for which I am mainly responsible, are an attempt to achieve this type of swaraj.

Then take economic independence. It is not the product of industrialization of the modern or the Western type. Indian economic independence means to me the economic uplift of every individual, male and female, by his or her own conscious effort. Under that system, all men and women will have enough clothing—not the mere loin-cloth, but what we understand by the term necessary articles of clothing—and enough food, including milk and butter which are today denied to millions.

This brings me to socialism. Real socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors who taught: "All land belongs to Gopal, where then is the boundary line? Man is the maker of that line and he can, therefore, unmake it." Gopal literally means shepherd; it also means God. In modern language it means the State, that is, the people. That the land today does not belong to the people is too true. But the fault is not in the teaching. It is in us who have not lived upto it.

I have no doubt that we can make as good an approach to it as is possible for any nation, not excluding

Russia, and that without violence. The most effective substitute for violent dispossession is the wheel with all its implications. Land and all property is his who will work it. Unfortunately, the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact.

54. Levelling Up and Down

. . . Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand and the levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class nearby cannot last one day in a free India in which the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.

55. Duty Rather than Right

I want to deal with one great evil that is afflicting society today. The capitalist and the zemindar talk of their rights, the labourer on the other hand of his, the prince of his divine right to rule, the ryot of his to resist it. If all simply

insist on rights and no duties, there will be utter confusion and chaos.

If instead of insisting on rights everyone does his duty, there will immediately be the rule of order established among mankind. There is no such thing as the divine right of kings to rule and the humble duty of the ryots to pay respectful obedience to their masters. Whilst it is true that these hereditary inequalities must go as being injurious to the well-being of the society, the unabashed assertion of rights of the hitherto down-trodden millions is equally injurious, if not more so to the same well-being. The latter behaviour is probably calculated to injure the millions rather than the few claimants of divine or other rights. They could but die a brave or cowardly death but those few dead would not bring in the orderly life of blissful contentment. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the correlation of the rights and duties. I venture to suggest that rights that do not flow directly from duty well performed are not worth having. They will be usurpations, sooner discarded the better. A wretched parent who claims obedience from his children without first doing his duty by them excites nothing but contempt. It is distortion of religious precept for a dissolute husband to expect compliance in every respect from his dutiful wife. But the children who flout their parent who is ever ready to do his duty towards them would be considered ungrateful and would harm themselves more than their parents. The same can be said about husband and wife. If you apply this simple and universal rule to employers and labourers, landlords and tenants, the princes and their subjects or the Hindus and the Muslims, you will find that the happiest relations can be established in all walks of life without creating disturbance in and dislocation of life and business which

you see in India as in other parts of the world. What I call the law of *Satyagraha* is to be deduced from an appreciation of duties and rights flowing therefrom . . .

What is duty of the Hindu towards his Muslim neighbour? His duty is to befriend him as man, to share his joys and sorrows and help him in distress. He will then have the right to expect similar treatment from his Muslim neighbour and will probably get the expected response. Supposing the Hindus are in a majority in a village with a sprinkling of Muslims in their midst, the duty of the majority towards the few Muslim neighbours is increased manifold, so much so that the few will not feel that their religion makes any difference in the behaviour of the Hindus towards them. The Hindus will *then* earn the right, *not* before, that the Muslims will be natural friends with them and in times of danger both the communities will act as one man. But suppose that the few Muslims do not reciprocate the correct behaviour of the many Hindus and show fight in every action, it will be a sign of unmanliness. What is then the duty of the many Hindus? Certainly not to overpower them by the brute strength of the many; that will be usurpation of an unearned right. Their duty will be to check their unmanly behaviour as they would that of their blood brothers. It is unnecessary for me to dilate further upon the illustration. I will close it by saying that the application will be exactly the same if the position is reversed. From what I have said it is easy enough to extend the application with profit to the whole of the present state which has become baffling because people do not apply in practice the doctrine of deriving every right from a prior duty well performed.

The same rule applies to the Princes and the ryots. The former's duty is to act as true servants of the people.

They will rule not by right granted by some outside authority, never by the right of the sword. They will rule by right of service, of greater wisdom. They will then have the right to collect taxes voluntarily paid and expect certain services equally voluntarily rendered, not for themselves but for the sake of the people under their care. If they fail to perform this simple and primary duty, the ryots not only owe no return duty but the duty devolves on them of resisting the princely usurpation. It may be otherwise said that the ryots earn the right of resisting the usurpation or misrule. But the resistance will become a crime against man in terms of duty if it takes the form of murder, rapine and plunder. Force that performance of duty naturally generates is the non-violent and invincible force that *Satyagraha* brings into being.

VII. SOME MEMORABLE PASSAGES

1. Let us forget all thoughts of "I a Hindu, you a Muslim"; or "I a Gujarati, you a Madrasi." Let us sink "I" and "mine" in a common Indian nationality. We shall be free only when a large number of our people are determined to swim or sink together.

2. My religion has no geographical limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself.

3. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.

4. Mine is not a religion of the prison-house. It has room for the least among God's creation. But it is proof against insolence, pride of race, religion or colour.

5. Why should we blaspheme God by fighting one another because we see Him through different media—the *Koran*, the *Bible*, the *Talmud*, the *Avesta* or the *Gita*? The same sun beats on the Himalayas as on the plains. Should the men of the plains quarrel with the men of the snows because of the different feel of the sun? Why should we make of books and formulas so many fetters to enslave us rather than use them as aids to our deliverance and union of hearts?

6. India must protect her primary industries like a mother protects her children against the whole world

without being hostile to it. Violent nationalism, otherwise known as imperialism, is the curse. Non-violent nationalism is a necessary condition of corporate or civilized life.

7. I do regard Islam to be a religion of peace in the same sense as Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism are. No doubt there are differences in degree, but the object of these religions is peace.

8. After all, the truest test of nationalism consists in a person thinking not only of half a dozen men of his own family or of a hundred men of his own clan, but considering as his very own the interest of that group which he calls his nation.

9. The Shastras were never intended to supplant reason but to supplement it and never could be pleaded in defence of injustice or untruth.

10. It has been said that Indian Swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, *i.e.*, the Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I for one would refuse to call it Swaraj and would fight it with all the strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. Whether under that rule the ministers were Hindus, Musalmans or Sikhs and whether the legislatures were exclusively filled by the Hindus or Musalmans or any other community, they would have to do even-handed justice.

11. I am a humble servant of India, and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. I discovered in my early days that the service of India is not inconsistent with the service of humanity. As I grew older in years, and I hope also in wisdom, I saw that the discovery was well made, and after nearly 50 years of public life, I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine, that the service of

one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world, has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours.

12. My Hinduism is not sectarian. It includes all that I know to be best in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism. I approach politics as everything else in a religious spirit. Truth is my religion and ahimsa is the only way of its realization.

13. Gurudev himself is international because he is truly national.

14. We must regard ourselves not as owners but as trustees of our wealth, and use it for the service of society, taking for ourselves no more than a fair return for service rendered. Under this system there would be none poor, none rich. All religions would be held equal. All quarrels arising out of religion, caste or economic grievance would cease to disturb peace on earth.

15. According to the scriptures, that was *dharma* which was enjoined by the holy books, followed by the sages, interpreted by the learned and which appeals to the heart. The first three conditions must be fulfilled before the fourth comes into operation. Thus one has no right to follow the precepts of an ignorant man or a rascal even though they commend themselves to one. Rigorous observance of harmlessness, non-enmity and renunciation were the first requisites for a person to entitle him to lay down the law, i.e. *dharma*.

Sources and Notes

I. General

1. **From "Hind Swaraj":** This book, which Gandhiji wrote in November 1909 during a voyage from England to South Africa, is in the form of a dialogue in which he refutes the arguments of an imaginary reader, that India is not a nation and that it cannot achieve swaraj through soul-force. *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, the Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, Vol. X, p. 27-32.
2. **Message to Lahore Sikhs:** About 150 Akali Sikhs were put to death within the precincts of the *Gurudwara* at Nankana Saheb near Lahore, when they entered it on February 20, 1921. The *Gurudwara* was in the possession of Mahant Narandas. *Young India*, 16-3-1921. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIX, p. 400-1.
3. **Humanity v. Patriotism:** A friend had complained that the message to Lahore Sikhs appealed to them as Indians, not as human beings. *Young India*, 16-3-1921. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIX, p. 427.
4. **Definitions of Swaraj:** *Navajivan*, 14-8-1921. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XX, p. 506-7.
5. **For the Masses:** From a speech at Women's Christian College, Madras, on March 24, 1925. *The Hindu*, 25-3-1925. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 396-7.
6. **Nationalism v. Internationalism:** *Young India*, 18-6-1925. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXVII, p. 255-6.
7. **Hate Evil, Not the Evil-Doer:** From a speech at Meccano Club, Calcutta, on August 28, 1925. *Forward*, 29-8-1925. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 125-7.
8. **Brotherhood of Man:** Speech at public meeting, Rangoon. *Young India*, 9-3-1929.
9. **Purna Swaraj:** *Young India*, 19-3-1931.

10. **India and the World:** From speech at All-India Congress Committee meeting held on September 15, 1940. D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, Vol. V, 1962, p. 322. *C.W.M.G.*; LXXIII; 1940; p. 17.

II. Harmony of Religions

11. **Religion and Country:** From an article commenting on M. Paul Richard's statement that Gandhiji "worked not for the freedom of India, but for non-violence in the world." *Young India*, 23-2-1922. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXII, p. 462.
12. **My Mission:** This was in reply to an open letter from one Pandit Ghasita Ram who had written: "Buddha in spite of his high morality could not convert the whole of India to Buddhism. Shankaracharya...could not make all India Vedantic. Christ...could not bring into the fold of Christianity the whole Jewish nation...The Mahatmas of the olden times kept themselves aloof from worldly worries, anxieties...and strove to gain perfect peace...You may live a calm life in a solitary cave in the meditation of God..." *Young India*, 3-4-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 349.
13. **Idolatry of Fanaticism:** *Young India*, 28-8-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 46.
14. **God is One:** *Young India*, 25-9-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 179-80.
15. **Tolerance**: From a speech at Advait Ashram, Alwaye, whose motto was "One Community, one Religion, one God". *Navajivan*, 5-4-1925. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 323-4.
16. **At Kanyakumari:** *Navajivan*, 29-3-1925. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 425.
17. **Hinduism**: *Young India*, 20-10-1927. Microfilm, NMML, p. 352.
18. **Broadest Toleration:** From a speech at a meeting of missionaries at Jaffna. *Young India*, 22-12-1927.
19. **Equality of Religions:** This is from the weekly letters to the Satyagraha Ashram written in 1930 from Yeravda Central Prison. From *Yeravda Mandir*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
20. **Religion A Personal Matter:** *Harijan*, 9-8-1942. Microfilm NMML, Vol. IX, No. 30, p. 261.

III. Social Bonds and Barriers

21. **A Curse:** From speech at Y.W.C.A., Madras on February 16, 1916. *The Indian Review*, February 1916. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIII, p. 232-3.
22. **Essential Reform:** *Navajivan*, 20-4-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 465-6.
23. **Hydra-Headed Monster:** *Young India*, 29-7-1926. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXXI, p. 212-3.
24. **Removal of Untouchability:** From *Yeravda Mandir*.
25. **Separate Electorates:** From statement on communal problems dated April 6, 1931. *The Hindu*, 7-4-1931. Vol. XLV, p. 394-5
26. **Varnas**: *Young India*, 4-6-1931.
27. **No Separate Electorate:** From Gandhiji's speech on November 13, 1931, at Minority Committee Meeting. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 296-98.
28. **Extract from Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare:** The British Government were working on a scheme, announced by Ramsay MacDonald on August 17, 1932, according to which the Depressed Classes would form a separate electorate. Home Department Special Branch File No. 800 (40) (4) Pt. I. p. 5. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XLIX, p. 190-93.
29. **Wanted A Living Pact:** From a private interview to journalists on September 20, 1932, in Yeravda Prison. At noon that day he had begun a "fast unto death" in protest against the British proposal to grant a separate electorate to untouchables. *Mahatma*, Vol. III, 1961, p. 167-8. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. LI. p. 117-18.
30. **Degradation of All:** *Harijan*, 11-2-1933. Vol. LIII, p. 257.
31. **No Antagonism:** *Harijan*, 17-11-1933. Vol. LVI, p. 196.
32. **Far-Reaching Consequences:** *Harijan*, 17-11-1933. Vol. LVI, p. 204-5.
33. **After the Proclamation**: The Travancore Maharaja had by a proclamation thrown open the temples in his State to all Hindus. Extract from Gandhiji's speech at Trivandrum on January 13, 1937, after visiting the Ananta Padmanabha Temple. *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, 1961, p. 122-3. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. LXIV, p. 237-9.
34. **Road to Swaraj:** *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.
35. **Services of Adivasis:** *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning*

and Place, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

36. **Ati-Sudras by Choice:** *The Hindu*, 19-9-1945.

IV. Hindu-Muslim Unity

37. **Unity is Strength:** *Young India*, 11-5-1921, *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XX, p. 89.
38. **The Law of Friendship:** *Navajivan*, 16-1-1922. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXII, p. 201-2.
39. **Statement Announcing 21-Day Fast:** Violent clashes had occurred between Hindus and Muslims in several parts of the country. The fast began on September 18 and ended on October 8, 1924. *Young India*; 25-9-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 171-2.
40. **All About the Fast**: *Young India*, 25-9-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, pp. 199-202.
41. **Statement Before Breaking Fast:** *New India*, 9-10-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 224.
42. **Solution to Communal Problem:** From speech at the Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference, London. *Young India*, 24-12-1931. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIII, p. 412-13.
43. **"Pray for Me":** *Harijan*, 5-8-1939, Microfilm, NMML, p. 228.
44. **His Vision:** Incidents of violent antagonism between Hindus and Muslims agonized Gandhiji. Hence, on January 13, 1948, he began his last fast. This message dated January 14, 1948, was dictated by Gandhiji to be read out at the prayer meeting the same afternoon. *Harijan*, 18-1-1948, Microfilm, NMML, p. 526.

V. Language

45. **Our Duty:** From speech at 8th session of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Indore on March 29, 1918. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIV, p. 292-3.
46. **Learn Hindi:** From speech at Mirzapur Park, Calcutta, on January 23, 1921. *Young India*; 2-2-1921. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XIX, p. 271-2.
47. **Sanskrit:** *Navajivan*, 28-3-1926. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXX, p. 195.
48. **Hindi—Our National Language:** From Gandhiji's presidential address at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Indore in 1935. *Hindi and English in the South*, National Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

49. **All-India Nationalism**: *Harijan*, 10-9-1938. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. LXVII, p. 325.
50. **All-India Common Speech:** *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place.*
51. **Linguistic Re-distribution of States:** *Harijan*, 1-2-1948.

VI. Economic Equality

52. **Identification With the Masses:** *Young India*, 11-9-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 121-2.
53. **Economic Independence:** From speech at Congress session at Faizpur, on December 27, 1936. *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, 1961, p. 114-5.
54. **Levelling Up and Down:** *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place.*
55. **Duty Rather Than Right:** *Harijan*, 6-7-1947. Vol. XL, No. 23, p. 217.

VII. Some Memorable Passages

1. Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. V, p. 118.
2. *Young India*, 11-8-1920. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 134.
3&4. *Young India*, 1-6-1921. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XX, p. 159.
5. *Young India*, 18-9-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 163.
6. *Young India*, 27-11-1924. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXV, p. 369.
7. *Young India*, 20-1-1927.
8. From speech at public meeting, Jaffna, on 26-11-1927. Mahadev Desai, *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. *C.W.M.G.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 321.
9. *Young India*, Vol. X; No. 10, 8-3-1928, p. 75.
10. *Young India*, 16-4-1931, p. 78.
11. *Harijan*, 17-11-1933. Vol. LVI, p. 204.
12. *Harijan*, 30.04.1938, Vol. LXVII, p. 37.
13. From Gandhiji's reply at a reception given to him by Tagore on February 18, 1940, at Santiniketan.
14. *The Hindu*, 19-9-1945.
15. *Harijan*, 17-11-1946.

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Gandhiji's basic ideas underwent no change during the forty years of his active public life, but their expression and application varied according to circumstances. While India struggled for freedom, large sections of its people remained divided by walls of communal, religious or linguistic prejudices; these barriers weakened and distracted the national will for freedom. Gandhiji made it his concern to reconcile differences and bring about harmony in place of conflict: he worked for heart-unity, not mere adjustments, for without such unity he felt that Swaraj, even if it did come, could not be genuine Swaraj.

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